(b) whether Prasar Bharati presently gives some prime-time slots on Metro Channel on annual contract basis;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the revenue earned therefrom;

(d) whether the Prasar Bharati has laid down any guidelines with regard to contracting of prime-time slots;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether some satellite channels have recently shown interest and propose to take the slots on DD Metro on long-term basis rather than on annual basis; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) Doordarshan's coverage is 75.5% area-wise, and 89.5% population-wise. Doordarshan reaches approximately 70 million households as against approximately 30 million households reached by satellite channels. The reach of DD Metro is 42% of the TV households while that of Zee and Sony are 30% and 24% respectively.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Prasar Bharati invited bids for bulk airtime sale of slots over DD-Metro for the 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. slots. M/s. Nine Network Austrialia Pvt. Ltd. were awarded the slots, for a revenue of Rs. 121 crores for 12 months.

(d) and (e) Prasar Bharati has been sourcing programmes through in-house productions, commissioning, sponsorship and on royalty. For outsourcing programmes on prime-time slots Prasar Bharati has been following its policy guidelines as amended from time to time.

(f) and (g) There have been some press reports to this effect. Prasar Bharati has not received any concrete proposal.

Proposal for merging Six Industrial Units of BYNL

†*540. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

to state:

(a) whether a proposal for merging all the six industrial units of Bharat Yantra Nigam Limited (BYNL), Allahabad, is under consideration of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the justification of the tender published for selling the Bharat Pumps and Compressor Ltd. (BPCL), Naini, Allahabad, a subsidiary company of Bharat Yantra Nigam Limited?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) The Department Related Parliamentary Standing committee, in its 44th report, had suggested a merger of the six subsidiaries of BYNL so as to leverage their combined strength since the holding company had not proved efficacious. With a view to improve the performance of these companies, the proposal for merger is one of the options of restructuring being considered.

(c) As a part of restructuring strategy, Government 'in principle' have taken a decision to convert Bharat Pumps and Compressors Limited (BPCL), a BIFR referred sick PSU, into a joint venture company. The joint venture partner would be expected to provide modern technology, managerial inputs, finances and market support to the Company and this may help strengthen the company.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Disinvestment of PSUs during 2001-2002

3944. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified certain public sector units for disinvestment during 2001-2002 financial year;

(b) if so, the details of such PSUs; and

(c) the steps taken for the disinvestment of those PSUs?